

Appl. No.: 10/657,679
Amendment Dated January 9, 2006
Reply to Office Action of September 22, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim [[1]] 16, wherein the quantity of water in the mixture ~~is substantially equal to twice the quantity of water necessary for crystallization of the plaster at atmospheric pressure and is 35 to [[40]] 45 parts by weight of water per 100 parts by weight of plaster when the threshold compression value is about 150 bars.~~
- 3-5 (Cancelled)
6. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim [[1]] 16, comprising initially compressing the mixture in the mold to reduce voids in the mixture to a ~~minimum~~ value [[or]] close to a minimum, then increasing the pressure applied to the mixture to at least said threshold value.
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim [[7]] 16, wherein the filler is chemically inert with respect to the plaster.
9. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim [[7]] 16, wherein the filler is not chemically inert with respect to the plaster.
10. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim [[1]] 16, wherein the mixture in the mold comprises a fluidifier.
11. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim 10, wherein the fluidifier is a deflocculating agent ~~such as melamine~~.

12. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim [[1]] 16, wherein said threshold value for the pressure increases with temperature and is in the range from about 100 to 150 bars when the temperature passes from about 15°C to 20°C.

13. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim [[1]] 16, wherein the application to the mixture in the mold of a pressure at least equal to that of said limiting value is accomplished by driving at least one element with a reduced cross section with respect to the corresponding cross section of the mold cavity into the mixture in the mold.

14. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 11, wherein the deflocculating agent is melamine.

15. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 13, wherein said element comprises a cylindrical rod sealingly mounted in an orifice of one wall of the mold, and including the step of guiding the rod axially in translation and driving it into the mixture.

16. (New) A method for manufacturing a building element based on plaster, comprising preparing a mixture of plaster, water and filler, said mixture comprising a quantity of water which is substantially equal to or greater than twice the quantity of water necessary for crystallization of plaster at atmospheric pressure, applying to the mixture in the mold a pressure that is at least equal to a threshold value beyond which plaster crystallization is prevented and obtaining a compressed mixture in which plaster is not crystallized and then unmolding the compressed mixture element and allowing the plaster in the mixture to crystallize outside the mold.

17. (New) A method according to claim 16, wherein the mixture in the mold comprises about 30% to 50% by weight of plaster and about 70% to 50% by weight of filler.